



City of Somerville

PLANNING BOARD

City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

4 FEBRUARY 2021 MEETING MINUTES

This meeting was conducted via remote participation on GoToWebinar.

NAME	TITLE	STATUS	ARRIVED
Michael Capuano	Chair	<i>Present</i>	
Amelia Aboff	Vice Chair	<i>Present</i>	
Sam Dinning	Clerk	<i>Present</i>	
Jahan Habib	Member	<i>Present</i>	
Rob Buchanan	Alternate	<i>Present</i>	

City staff present: Rebecca Lyn Cooper (Planning & Zoning), Charlotte Leis (Planning & Zoning)

The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm and adjourned at 6:45pm.

PUBLIC HEARING: 337 Somerville Ave

Adam Dash, on behalf of Union Square Ventures LLC, presented the proposal to amend a 2016 approval to alter a square footage use cap of a commercial condo development that consists of Bow Market, Sally O'Brien's, the SCC Offices, and a vacant storefront. The original intent of the condition had been for the caps to apply to Bow Market only and not the other units, so the applicant is seeking to modify the conditions to make it possible to tenant the space.

Chair Capuano asked Ms. Leis to review the existing conditions. She also presented and discussed the Zoning Board of Appeal's (ZBA) approval of the revised language of Condition 3: "Any commercial space or principal structure with a principal entrance onto Somerville Ave is exempt from the square footage caps of the permitted principal uses listed in Condition #1".

The Board and Staff discussed the intent of the revised condition language.

Julian Lewis (owner of the storefront unit), the Board, and Mr. Dash discussed the intent of the proposal, the Special Permit granted previously for an office at this location, and the economic challenges due to Covid-19. They spoke about the ZBA approval of the conditions, which clarified the particular uses permitted in the commercial spaces without imposing caps.

Chair Capuano opened public testimony. No one wished to speak. Chair Capuano closed public testimony.

The Board, Staff, and the applicant discussed the development, noting that it is effectively two lots, and clarifying the condition language, the regulations under the current Zoning Ordinance, and Special Permit language, noting comparisons and differences between the conditions drafted for the Planning Board as opposed to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Board confirmed that they are not bound by the ZBA's decision, however they chose to adopt the same condition language for clarity and consistency.

Following a motion by Member Buchanan, seconded by Clerk Dinning, the Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the revision and to adopt the condition language as drafted in the Staff Memo, and with the amended Condition 3 as adopted by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

RESULT:

APPROVED

OTHER BUSINESS: Planning Board Elections

Chair Capuano noted that Member Habib is serving on the CPC going forward.

Chair Capuano nominated Amelia Aboff to continue to serve as Vice Chair, the motion was seconded by Clerk Dinning. The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve.

Chair Capuano nominated Sam Dinning to continue to serve as Clerk, the motion was seconded by Mr. Habib. The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve.

Vice Chair Aboff nominated Michael Capuano to continue to serve as Chair, the motion was seconded by Clerk Dinning. Michael Capuano abstained; the remainder of the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to approve.

RESULT:

APPROVED

NOTICE: These minutes constitute a summary of the votes and key discussions at this meeting. To review a full recording, please contact the Planning & Zoning Division at planning@somervillema.gov.